

# SUMMARY OF BREAK OUT SESSION DISCUSSIONS

## Performance Management Forum

February 15, 2006

### 1) What is working well at your agency?

- There is a lot more **training** going on and agencies have been forced to think about training.
- We are gradually making headway. **Cultural changes** are occurring: employees more aware of system and are becoming involved in the process. Performance management planning and evaluation are becoming clearer to employees.
- Since agencies must report performance plan and evaluation totals and timeliness and employees are aware of that, **employees have more confidence in management's commitment to the process and program**
- **Sending reminders** to supervisors and managers of due dates for plans and evaluations and following up closely.
- Supervisors are doing better with performance plans and are **submitting plans and evaluations on time more frequently**.
- **Publishing a calendar of due dates** for the performance year with consequences if dates not met, such as a mandatory meeting with the agency head.
- Call the Program "Performance Management System" not "Performance Pay". Helps refocus the emphasis and provide a little more credibility since pay hasn't been there.
- **DHR's website has good information** and the article by Jeff Wells regarding total compensation was helpful.
- More employees are encouraged to take supervisory training since performance management is a critical element.

### What does NOT work well?

- **Pay is overwhelmingly the most significant negative** all are encountering. Employees feel they have met their end of the bargain in performance but there is no pay and thus all their work is not valued.
- **Changing the overall philosophy of performance management program**, the rules, and the forms each year cause the process to be overly confusing and lack credibility.
- **Inflated ratings** are creating morale problems and emphasizing a win/lose mentality.
- Organizational changes and related problems are making the **administrative detail in the performance management process overwhelming**. For example, supervisors are not writing good plans and job descriptions are out of date.
- **Supervisors need more training and support** in coaching, planning, evaluating, and documentation.

- New supervisors are flying by the “seat of their pants” without formal training.
- **Most supervisors do not provide coaching** due to shortage of time; not knowing how to do it – has to be learned and time shortage prevents training;
- **Training on performance management as required in Programs is not happening** due to budget cuts, staffing constraints, time issues since lean staffed.
- **Lack of management commitment** to both performance management and pay.
- **Ratings are inconsistent:** between supervisors and across and within agencies.
- Employees view system negatively based on constant changes to program.

#### **What are employees’ top concerns?**

- Money for Performance
- Consistency in Ratings
- Fairness and Objectivity
- Ability to expand knowledge or do extra work to get higher rating since lean staffing has required everyone to assume more work and all this work is just part of the regular performance plan.
- The performance program has not increased productivity.
- Supervisors need to be held accountable for performance plans and evaluations. There needs to be support from the top down.
- If you are good at your job, the only reward is more work.

#### **What are managements’ top concerns?**

- Funding:
  - How do we keep good employees without money?
  - Level 2 employees are meeting expectations yet are penalized for it with less money.
  - New hires can be hired at a higher salary than long-term employees, even make more than their supervisor.
  - Serious concern about moving employees through the ranges.
  - Management would like more flexibility for spot awards, bonuses, etc. to reward better performers.
  - Where is our recruitment appeal? It is not benefits, salary, or even PERA. Losing state employees to McDonalds.
- Performance management hurts solid, reliable employees who don’t have time to add to skills.
- It’s difficult for supervisors to complete all evaluations at the same time as opposed to spread out over the year.
- Holding supervisors accountable. Look at PDQs for supervisors: how much of their work time is allocated to supervising? Still performing a full range of duties in addition to supervision.
- State is not encouraging career employment.

- The need for some certainty about compensation program versus the entitlement mentality is a dilemma.
- Management have to “play the system” depending on what money is available:
  - The only way to give employees significant pay increases is to inflate their ratings.
  - When don’t get money, give higher ratings to compensate for lack of funds. When have money, give lower ratings so there is money to go around.
  - How do you get supervisors to rate fairly?
- Difficult to manage poor performer due to process, appeals, mediation (black hole), time consuming process.
- The need to revise Programs again when change rules on non-base awards or other items. Then HR is saddled with the task of selling the changes to employees without hurting morale.
- The time it takes to carry out the whole process is a problem.